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MANPOWER, MORALE, EVACUATION

Extracts from CIA-DIA Appraisals

There has been no evidence to indicate that Hanoi's determination to pursue the war has declined. Likewise, there is no evidence that the morale of the populace has decreased. However, the increasing hardships being borne by the people have resulted in instances of skepticism of the regime's propaganda line.

There has also been continued emphasis on evacuation from urban areas.

Although the role of women in certain activities is to be expanded, North Vietnam does not appear to be suffering from a general manpower shortage.

On-The-Spot Reports

The mobilization of the entire population for national defense is producing serious labor difficulties. [REDACTED]

The Vietnamese authorities have decided to evacuate a great portion of civilian population residing in the eastern section of Hanoi near Paul Doumer Bridge and near the electric power station. [REDACTED]

Evacuation from Haiphong since American bombing began has reduced the population from 400,000 to 250,000 people. The labor force in Haiphong is predominately women. [REDACTED]

If it is excluded that Hanoi will not capitulate before American force, fatigue, and anxiety are also no less real. [REDACTED]

The streets are deserted between 0900 and 1700. [REDACTED]

Increased U. S. Air Force activity in the Hanoi area is causing a deterioration of morale in the city. [REDACTED]

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Manpower, Morale, Evacuation (continued)

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During the night alerts, citizens could be seen running wildly toward shelters. There is a definite breakdown in order and the air raid wardens had difficulty in controlling the people. For the first time, it could be noted that people were making no attempt to hide their fear or fatigue. [REDACTED]

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The severity of raid (29 Apr near Gia Lam) struck observers who did not hide their pessimism. [REDACTED]

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On clear days air activities were virtually continual from 0630 to 1900 daily. The constant series of alerts seriously inhibited school, repair work, and agriculture; alerts followed all-clears incessantly. [REDACTED]

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In early April, the people of Haiphong seemed much more confident than they appeared in September 1966. There appeared to be no shortages of consumer items at this time (no queues were seen and no complaints were heard from the people). This is in contrast to September 1966 when there were shortages of consumer items -- mostly soap, for which there were always queues. [REDACTED]

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Some villagers in the coastal areas of the North Vietnamese provinces between the 17th and 20th parallels hold the view that if the North Vietnamese government stopped infiltration of troops and supplies into South Vietnam then American bombing of their villages would stop. They state that they are becoming less impressed with their government's claim that attacking aircraft are being shot down, since few have witnessed the downing of any planes. Consequently, they are beginning to doubt seriously the Hanoi regime's boast of inevitable victory. . . . Villagers living in frequently bombed areas are especially terrified of the air strikes and limit their daytime activities to the minimum. [REDACTED]

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It seemed surprising, none the less the fact, that none of the people in Haiphong took the North Vietnamese government's propaganda seriously, particularly the claims of the number of U.S. planes shot down or the claims of the size and number of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong in the south. [REDACTED]

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The villagers expressed resentment at having to repair bomb damage and dig defense trenches without compensation. [REDACTED]

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Manpower, Morale, Evacuation (continued)

The morale of the North Vietnamese has been dealt a severe blow by the realization that the war is not only lost economically but also militarily. They now know that Soviet missiles are not capable of stopping air raids. They also fear that the MIG-21 cannot cope with the technical superiority of the American planes. . . . Hanoi cannot possibly continue the war for another two years, and even during that period its efforts would be reduced to sporadic raids of sabotage against installations.

[REDACTED]

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Overflight of the capital did not cause any damage to Hanoi except that all activities were interrupted nine times. However, this war on nerves begins to affect morale of the Vietnamese who are known for their high morale. Some think that this is precisely one of the U.S. objectives.

[REDACTED]

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All schools have been evacuated from Hanoi and Haiphong. Only people required to man the essential services remain in the two cities. . . . The morale of the North Vietnamese was at the lowest in late January 67. Food has become scarce since the advent of the bombing and the North Vietnamese live miserably. The conclusion reached from talking to the people is that they would like to see the war end as soon as possible.

[REDACTED]

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The general level of morale has suffered lately by the continuous U.S. aerial bombardments. The people no longer believe in a victory, but nevertheless continue to support the regime.

[REDACTED]

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